



NAFTA Technical Working Group on Pesticides
Grupo de Trabajo Técnico del TLCAN sobre Plaguicidas
Groupe de travail technique de l'ALENA sur les pesticides

PROJECT COMPLETION SHEET

PROJECT TITLE: Pesticide Applicator Examination Development

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PROJECT DATES: October 1999 to November 2005

GOAL/OBJECTIVE: To utilize a standard, officially-recognized process in the development of a core exam that is statistically reliable and valid in measuring the competency of a pesticide applicator. A uniform approach will provide consistency, increase program credibility and make effective use of resources.

BACKGROUND:

The pesticide applicator certification and training (C&T) program is the first line of risk mitigation in a program whose goal is to protect human health and the environment. To that end, the program aims to provide pesticide users with the knowledge needed to use products safely and effectively. The examination process verifies that the applicator has achieved competency so that products can be used in a safe and effective manner. EPA has delegated the responsibilities of determining user competency to the pesticide program with the lead in each state or territory. In Canada, the Pest Management Regulatory Agency relies heavily on the certification and training programs which are within the mandate of the provincial regulatory agencies. In order to sustain the credibility of the program, make effective use of resources and provide consistency in examinations used across the states and Canada, EPA and the PMRA developed a core examination using a reliable and valid method for examination development.

In addition to federal government agencies from both the US and Canada, other stakeholders involved included state and provincial program managers, pesticide applicators and representatives from applicator associations in both countries.

OUTPUT/RESULTS:

Two versions of the core exam were completed in June 2003, after extensive stakeholder involvement. The exam has been implemented by two Canadian provinces, Alberta and Manitoba, and four entities in the US - Ohio, Washington DC, and the US Army and Navy.

This project has benefited stakeholders by providing them with an exam that can validly measure applicator

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competency in core areas related to pesticide application. The development process was comprehensive, allowing all interested states and provinces to benefit from the exam. Additionally, the public benefits from certification of only those applicators that are verified as competent in states and provinces using the core exam. This ensures an additional level of protection, which should be manifested in safer use practices, reduced environmental contamination and fewer exposures to agricultural workers and the public. The project leads will continue to work together in order to ensure that the integrity of the exam is maintained, and to refresh it periodically.